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EXAMINER

THOMPSON, JAMES A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2625

DATE MAILED: 09/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/629,464

Applicant(s)

SAYUDA, HIROYUKI

Examiner

James A. Thompson

Art Unit

2625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 July 2006 and 12 April 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 July 2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/12/06.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Response to Arguments***

1. Applicant's arguments filed 13 July 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

**Regarding page 2, lines 7-13:** An initialed and signed copy of the Information Disclosure Statement filed 12 April 2006 is included with the present Office action. Although the previous office action was mailed later than the filing of the IDS (18 April 2006), the Office action was written before the filing of the IDS (05 April 2006).

**Regarding page 2, line 14 to page 4, line 9:** Reber (US Patent 6,138,151) teaches that there is a portion of the printed code associated with the printed publication, and thus information related to an image element constituting a document image is specified (column 5, lines 14-17 of Reber). Said information is represented by a URL (column 5, lines 26-40 of Reber). As is abundantly well-known in the art, a URL is represented by either by an absolute path or a relative path with reference positional information. Since the only types of URL's are specified either by an absolute path or a relative path with reference positional information, the fact that the information is represented by a URL inherently includes the fact that said URL is specified either by an absolute path or a relative path with reference positional information. Therefore, the prior art rejections in said previous office action are maintained and the present office action is made final.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reber (US Patent 6,138,151) in view of Bhattacharjya (US Patent 6,456,393 B1).

Regarding claims 1 and 10: Reber discloses an image processing apparatus (figure 1 of Reber) comprising an input part (figure 1(44) of Reber) that inputs hyperdocument data (column 5, lines 21-28 of Reber); an embedding data generation part (figure 1(42) of Reber) that generates coupling information (column 4, lines 20-22 and column 5, lines 11-13 of Reber) to specify related information related to an image element constituting a document image (column 5, lines 14-17 of Reber), wherein the related information is represented by an absolute path or is represented by a relative path with reference positional information (column 5, lines 26-40 of Reber); and an embedding part (figure 1(46) of Reber) that uses the coupling information to determine at least a portion of the document to embed the coupling information (column 5, lines 41-50 of Reber), and embeds the coupling information by superimposing over the portion of the document (column 7, lines 13-17 of Reber) to form the document image of the hyperdocument data inputted by the input part (column 7, lines 3-12 of Reber), wherein a configuration of

Art Unit: 2625

pixels plotted in embedded areas is different from that in ordinary plotting areas (column 7, lines 16-19 of Reber). Since the embedded coupling information is a printed code (column 5, lines 18-22 of Reber) that is to be read by a computer to obtain hyperdocument information (column 5, lines 25-29 and lines 38-40 of Reber), the configuration of pixels plotted in embedded areas is different from that in ordinary plotting areas (column 7, lines 16-19 of Reber). The appearance information is included as part of the hyperdocument information since many different types of links, such as a telnet window, an html page, an ftp session, *et cetera* can be chosen (column 5, lines 26-40 of Reber). A telnet window looks different from an ftp session, which looks different from a html page, and so on. Furthermore, the path provided by the embedding data generation part is a uniform resource locator (URL), which includes a path (column 5, lines 26-40 of Reber). As is well-known in the art, a URL can be either an absolute path or a relative path with reference positional information.

Reber does not disclose expressly that said coupling information determines at least a portion of the *image element* and is embedded over at least part of the *image element*.

Bhattacharjya discloses embedding computer-readable information (figure 3(30) and column 3, lines 8-17 of Bhattacharjya) over at least part of an image element (figure 5 (32) and column 3, lines 44-51 of Bhattacharjya).

Reber and Bhattacharjya are combinable because they are from the same field of endeavor, namely embedding and encoding digital information in documents. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to embed the coupling information taught by Reber using the

method taught by Bhattacharjya through which digital data is encoded directly and unobtrusively on associated text data. The computer-readable information taught by Bhattacharjya would be the coupling information taught by Reber. Thus, the coupling information would determine at least a portion of image element taught by Bhattacharjya. The motivation for doing so would have been to be able to embed said coupling data without affecting the document's appearance to a human reader (column 1, lines 58-63 of Bhattacharjya), which is clearly desirable since such an embedding would provide valuable information without noticeably reducing the image quality. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Bhattacharjya with Reber to obtain the invention as specified in claims 1 and 10.

Further regarding claim 10: The apparatus of claim 1 performs the method of claim 10.

**Further regarding claims 2 and 11:** Bhattacharjya discloses appearance information (column 3, lines 3-9 of Bhattacharjya) defining the location of embedding on the document image (column 3, lines 8-9 of Bhattacharjya), and embedding is performed based on the appearance information (column 3, lines 8-12 of Bhattacharjya).

**Regarding claims 3 and 12:** Reber discloses that the coupling information indicates a location of the related information (column 5, lines 21-29 of Reber).

**Regarding claims 4 and 13:** Reber discloses that the coupling information specifies information indicative of a location of the related information (column 5, lines 21-29 of Reber).

**Regarding claims 5 and 14:** Reber does not disclose expressly that the coupling information specifies the related information itself.

Bhattacharjya discloses embedding the related information itself into the document data (column 3, lines 8-12 of Bhattacharjya).

Reber and Bhattacharjya are combinable because they are from the same field of endeavor, namely embedding and encoding digital information in documents. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to embed the related information itself, as taught by Bhattacharjya. The suggestion for doing so would have been that, using the method taught by Bhattacharjya, one can embed data unobtrusively (column 1, lines 58-63 of Bhattacharjya) and thus one could simply embed the related information itself, as taught by Bhattacharjya, instead of only the location of the related information, as taught by Reber. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Bhattacharjya with Reber to obtain the invention as specified in claims 5 and 14.

**Further regarding claims 6 and 15:** Bhattacharjya discloses embedding the coupling information in a form or color in which the coupling information is difficult to identify visually (column 3, lines 12-17 and column 1, lines 58-63 of Bhattacharjya). As discussed above in the arguments regarding claims 1 and 10, embedding is performed with the embedding part taught by Reber.

**Further regarding claims 8 and 16:** Bhattacharjya discloses that the appearance information is based on logical information (column 3, lines 5-9 of Bhattacharjya). Detecting text blocks clearly requires logical information upon which to base said detection.

**Regarding claims 9 and 17:** Reber discloses an identification generator (figure 1(10) of Reber) that generates identification (column 3, lines 65-67 of Reber) and manages correspondenc-

es between the identification and the coupling information (column 5, lines 11-13 and lines 18-22 of Reber).

**Regarding claim 7:** Reber discloses an image forming medium (figure 1(12) of Reber) on which an image constituted by an image element is formed (column 3, lines 38-44 of Reber), wherein coupling information (column 5, lines 11-13 of Reber) from hyperdocument data (column 5, lines 25-29 of Reber) determines at least a portion of the document to embed the coupling information (column 5, lines 41-50 of Reber), specifies related information relating to the image element to be embedded (column 7, lines 12-19 of Reber) such that the related information is represented by an absolute path or is represented by a relative path with reference positional information (column 5, lines 26-40 of Reber), and appearance information from the hyperdocument data (column 5, lines 26-40 of Reber) defines location of embedding in an image document (figure 1(12) and column 5, lines 21-25 of Reber).

Reber does not disclose expressly that said coupling information determines at least a portion of the *image element* and is superimposed over the portion of the image element.

Bhattacharjya discloses embedding computer-readable information (figure 3(30) and column 3, lines 8-17 of Bhattacharjya) over at least part of an image element (figure 5 (32) and column 3, lines 44-51 of Bhattacharjya).

Reber and Bhattacharjya are combinable because they are from the same field of endeavor, namely embedding and encoding digital information in documents. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to embed the coupling information taught by Reber using the method taught by Bhattacharjya through which digital data is

encoded directly and unobtrusively on associated text data. Thus, the coupling information would determine at least a portion of image element taught by Bhattacharjya. The motivation for doing so would have been to be able to embed said coupling data without affecting the document's appearance to a human reader (column 1, lines 58-63 of Bhattacharjya), which is clearly desirable since such an embedding would provide valuable information without noticeably reducing the image quality. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Bhattacharjya with Reber to obtain the invention as specified in claim 7.

**Regarding claim 18:** Reber discloses an image processing apparatus (figure 1 of Reber) comprising an input part (figure 1 (44) of Reber) that inputs hyperdocument data (column 5, lines 21-28 of Reber) and coupling information (column 5, lines 11-13 of Reber) to specify related information related to an image element constituting a document image (column 5, lines 14-17 of Reber), wherein the related information is represented by an absolute path or is represented by a relative path with reference positional information (column 5, lines 26-40 of Reber); and an embedding part (figure 1(46) of Reber) that uses the coupling information to determine at least a portion of the document to embed the coupling information (column 5, lines 41-50 of Reber), wherein the hyperdocument data includes appearance information (column 5, lines 26-40 of Reber) defining location of embedding in the document image (figure 1 (12) and column 5, lines 21-25 of Reber), and embeds the coupling information by superimposing over the portion of the document (column 7, lines 13-17 of Reber) to form the document image of the hyperdocument data inputted by the input part (column 7, lines 3-12 of Reber).

Reber does not disclose expressly that said coupling information determines at least a portion of the *image element* and is embedded over at least part of the *image element*; and that image concentration of the coupling information is changed depending on image concentration of an area which the coupling information is embedded.

Bhattacharjya discloses embedding computer-readable information (figure 3(30) and column 3, lines 8-17 of Bhattacharjya) over at least part of an image element (figure 5 (32) and column 3, lines 44-51 of Bhattacharjya); and changing the image concentration of the computer-readable information depending on image concentration of an area in which the computer-readable information is embedded (column 3, lines 36-43 of Bhattacharjya). The image concentration of embedded computer-readable information depends upon how the concentration of text present and the precise manner in which the pixels comprising the text portion of the image are arranged (column 3, lines 36-43 of Bhattacharjya).

Reber and Bhattacharjya are combinable because they are from the same field of endeavor, namely embedding and encoding digital information in documents. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to embed the coupling information taught by Reber using the method taught by Bhattacharjya through which digital data is encoded directly and unobtrusively on associated text data. Thus, the coupling information would determine at least a portion of image element taught by Bhattacharjya. The computer-readable information taught by Bhattacharjya would be the coupling information taught by Reber. The motivation for doing so would have been to be able to embed said coupling data without affecting the document's appearance to a human reader

(column 1, lines 58-63 of Bhattacharjya), which is clearly desirable since such an embedding would provide valuable information without noticeably reducing the image quality. Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Bhattacharjya with Reber to obtain the invention as specified in claim 18.

**Further regarding claims 19 and 20:** Bhattacharjya discloses that computer-readable data encoding is performed by darkening a site and then not darkening a site (binary 1) or not darkening a site and then darkening a site (binary 0) (column 3, lines 44-49 of Bhattacharjya). The encoding processing is performed based on the assumption that the original text pixels are not at maximum darkness (column 3, lines 12-17 of Bhattacharjya). Therefore, areas in which the image has a higher level of maximum darkness text pixels, less computer-readable data can be encoded. Likewise, areas in which the image has a lower level of maximum darkness text pixels, more computer-readable data can be encoded. Therefore, the image concentration of the computer-readable information, which corresponds to the coupling information taught by Reber, increases when the image concentration of the area is lower than a predetermined value, and the image concentration of the computer-readable information decreases when the image concentration of the area is higher than a predetermined value.

**Regarding claims 21-24:** Reber discloses that the reference positional information (column 5, lines 26-40 of Reber) is embedded in the document image (column 5, lines 45-52 of Reber).

**Conclusion**

4. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James A. Thompson whose telephone number is 571-272-7441. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30AM-5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David K. Moore can be reached on 571-272-7437. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



19 September 2006

James A. Thompson  
Examiner  
Technology Division 2625



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